

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 13 as follows:

The higher bids receive more advantageous placement on the search result list page generated by the search engine 208 when a search using the search term bid on by the advertiser is executed. In one embodiment, the amount bid by an advertiser comprises a money amount that is deducted from the account of the advertiser for each time the advertiser's web site is accessed via a hyperlink on the search result list page. Alternatively, the amount bid may comprise any economic value given by the advertiser. A searcher clicks on the hyperlink with a computer input device to initiate a retrieval request to retrieve the information associated with the advertiser's hyperlink. Preferably, each access or click on a search result list hyperlink will be redirected to the search engine web server 208 to associate the "click" with the account identifier for an advertiser. This redirect action, which is not apparent to the searcher, will access account identification information coded into the search result page before accessing the advertiser's URL using the search result list hyperlink clicked on by the searcher. The account identification information is recorded in the advertiser's account along with information from the retrieval request as a retrieval request event. Since the information obtained through this mechanism conclusively matches an account identifier with a URL in a manner not possible using conventional server system logs known in the art, accurate account debit records will be maintained. The advertiser's web site description and hyperlink on the search result list page is accompanied by an indication that the advertiser's listing is a paid listing. Each paid listing displays a cost to the advertiser, which is an amount corresponding to a price-per-click paid by the advertiser for each referral to the advertiser's site through the search result list.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 21, line 20 as follows:

The individual listings section 606 includes a quick page fill portion 615 and an individual listings update portion ~~[[610]] 616~~ and a quick page fill portion 615. The individual listings update portion ~~[[610]] 616~~ includes a grid showing all of the advertiser's listings 620 under the selected account, current bid windows 622, current position windows 624, bid to become number 1 windows 626, a current bid tool 628, desired rank text entry window 630 and a bid cap window 632 along with an update button 634 and a reset button 636. Thus, for each search listing 620, the grid shows the advertiser's current bid amount in a current bid window 622, the advertiser's current position relative to other search listings for the same search term, in the current position windows 624, and the bid amount required to achieve the number one rank in the bid to become number 1 window 626. The current bid tool 628 is a hyperlink which redirects the user's browser to a web page showing some or all current bids for the search term and allowing the advertiser to adjust his bid to achieve any desired rank among the listed search listings.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 23, line 11 as follows:

A change bids page 518 and an associated search and sort functionality 514 are accessible by clicking a change bids link 512. The change bids page 518 performs the bid change algorithm according to bid changes specified by the advertiser. The search and sort functionality may be implemented by any suitable search engine or searching and sorting code. After processing the bids according to the specified changes, a check is performed at a block 520. If error conditions exist, an error message is provided, block 522. If no errors exist, the bid change process is completed, for example by verifying the changes with the advertiser and copying the modified search listings back into the active market place and ~~[[]]~~, block 524. A confirmation message is sent to the advertiser, block 524 and the bid change process ends at block 528.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 24, line 15 as follows:

At block 550, the bid queue operates to update the listings of the advertiser. The bid queue is implemented because updating each bid takes a finite amount of time and many bids for position may be submitted in a short time frame. For example, if an advertiser with hundreds or thousands of bids performs a bid to position all operation, block 532, processing all bids may take several seconds or longer. Rather than freeze the screen of the advertiser's web browser, by submitting the bids to be modified to a bid queue the advertiser is free to attend to other details. Similarly, other advertisers who submit bids while a large number of bid updates are occurring are also freed for other processing. The bid queue of block 550 provides additional features as well. If an ~~advertise~~ advertiser submits additional updates to any bid for which a change has been requested but which is still sitting in the queue, the second-submitted bid change will overwrite the first-submitted change. This may allow an advertiser to delete a mistakenly submitted bid which can be advantageous since grandfathered bids will lose their grandfather status upon change.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 25, line 10 as follows:

From the foregoing, it can be seen that the present invention provides method and apparatus which allow ~~allows~~ a user to designate a selected position or rank for ~~[[an]]~~ advertiser search listings. The user specifies information such as a bid cap and a desired rank for selected search listings. The system applies bid change logic and, where appropriate, adjusts the bid amount for the selected search listings to move the search listing to the desired rank. Preferably, the desired rank is limited to a premium position at or near the top of search results to be presented to a searcher.